

SNOW TRAVELERS GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING December 16, 1998

Meeting was called to order at 7:10 pm at Northern Power Sports by President John Johnston.

John Johnston announced that the minutes were in the newsletter for those interested.

John Johnston gave the financial report. \$14585.83 in regular account and \$977.28 in the gaming account.

John Johnston announced that Lorena Hegdal won the Polaris Indy 500 RMK in the ASSA raffle.

Rides - John announced that all rides have been canceled to date due to the lack of snow. Chuck Johnson said when it warms up he will check the trail between Chatanika and Chena Hot Springs Road. He will put a message on the FST list-serve when the ride will be. Riding in the Chatanika area has been pretty good.

Someone announced that riding to McClaren River Lodge has been good. The road is hard pack from Paxson to Tangle River and then powder the rest of the way.

Jack McCombs said he would be willing to host a ride up the Salcha River. His cabin could be used as a warming hut.

New Years Fireworks - John Johnston has been working with Mike from Mikes Chevron on having a bon fire. They have the blessing from the UAF Fire Department. John has a meeting scheduled with Terry Vrabec on Friday to work out the last issues. The FST Board decided they did not want to use pallet for the fire as the agreement is to pick up any nails associated with the fire. That could be a big project so it was decided to go with slabwood. The plan is to have the fire from 6pm to 8pm, letting it die down by 8pm when they plan to start the fireworks. Scott Heidorn, Greg Kalal, and John Johnston volunteered to man the fire.

Snowmobile Safety Week January 17th - 23rd. - Rick and Renee have been working with TV, radio, and news stations to do PSA's and provide other safety information. On January 21st there will be a safety class at Compeaus. Rick said he needed some help and will pass around a sign up sheet. The News Miner said they would do an interview for a story.

ASSA - John Johnston announced that ASSA will be having a drawing for a Mini Z for anyone joining ASSA or renewing their membership between now and December 23rd.

Denali - No word has been received on the status of the closure. ASSA and the Alaska Outdoor Council have investigated taking legal action if the Park Service proceeds with the closure. Scott Heidorn suggested that it may not be in the best interest of snowmobilers to be the lead on this suit. The AOC or Alaska Independence Party would be in a better position to be the lead as this not only a snowmobile issue. It is an access issue. There was much discussion on the case. This will become a national or even international issue. The bottom line is that it is a states rights issue rather than a snowmobile access issue. The press will not report this correctly and oversimplify it. ASSA estimates it would cost \$25,000 to file an injunction and the cost will go up from there. John Johnston asked if the club would support ASSA being involved in the case but not being the lead. He said he would pass that on to the ASSA Board.

Someone mentioned that a snowmobile was seen chasing some caribou out on Summit Lake. They were unable to catch the person. This really gives snowmobilers a black eye. Someone suggested that FST consider looking at offering rewards for catching people involved in these kinds of activities.

Elections - Darryl Bohn and Sue Geist have been added to the list of candidates to the FST Board. John Johnston announced that elections would be at the January meeting. Lee Johnson said that the January meeting is when we traditionally held elections.

Bob Potter and Gary Nance have the McClaren River Lodge. Bob can be reached at 488-1525. They can handle about 35 people right now. The bunkhouse has been completely redone. Bob said that a group from Delta was recently out there riding and he encourages the FST to take a trip out. John Johnston said he would work with Bob on the idea.

Dog Sled Race - John Johnston announced that Time Mowery had contacted him looking for people with snowmobiles to assist at a races this coming Saturday. The race starts at Pike Landing and they want a couple machines to run the Chena out to the mouth before the race. Race starts about 10am and it should take less than an hour. Anyone interested in helping should call John.

Denali Bank Deal - John Johnston announced for Gary Roth that Denali State Bank was offering 4% interest for 4 years with 10% down to club members that bought a machine during the meeting.

7:55 Break

8:15 Resume

Jim Day, Arctic Cat Sales and Service Representative was in attendance. He said he was available for questions if people wanted to talk about technical issues. Jim is also a member of ASRA.

Funding Position - John Johnston said himself, Chuck Johnson, and Leroy Gross formed a committee to review applications for the position and would be making a recommendation to the board.

Chuck Johnson said that people can sign up with the Nation Weather Service to automatically receive weather reports via E-mail at no charge.

ASRA - John Johnston said that on January 5, 1999 there is a meeting at the Westmark Hotel. ASRA will have a representative present. Jim Day said he is a member but will not be present. Gary Roth and others are forming a fairbanks version of ASRA. Rita Heidkamp suggested that with all of these snowmobile advocacy groups forming there needs to be some coordination. Jim Day said ASRA came out of AEDC as a group to focus on promoting winter tourism. Its focus is developing tourism for the whole state. The #1 priority right now is allowing riding in Anchorage. Jim said the ASRA are in favor of statewide improvements. Last year they brought up a group of tour guides to work on developing tour operations. Rita asked Jim if ASRA has taken a position on the Denali issue. Jim said they took a position that the Park Service needs to follow the rules. Rita did not want to see ASRA sell their support at the expense of the riders.

Denali Hearing - Jack McCombs addressed the way people acted at the Denali hearing. He said it is not the place to cheer and jeer at the people trying to testify. John Johnston said it did happen and some people were rude. Sterling Muth said people need to be able to voice their opinions. It is the moderator job to control the tone of the meeting. The Park Service made no attempt to control the tone so it is there fault. The Daily News Miner did a very slanted story on the meeting as there was really only a few outbreaks and for the most part people were well behaved.

Chamber of Commerce - Scott Heidorn reminded everyone of the work that the Chamber is doing. The worked hard to get funds for the DOT winter trails study and are working on getting trail components included with DOT projects. People should be sure and thank the businesses that are members of the Chamber.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45.

Respectively submitted,

Lee Johnson, Secretary